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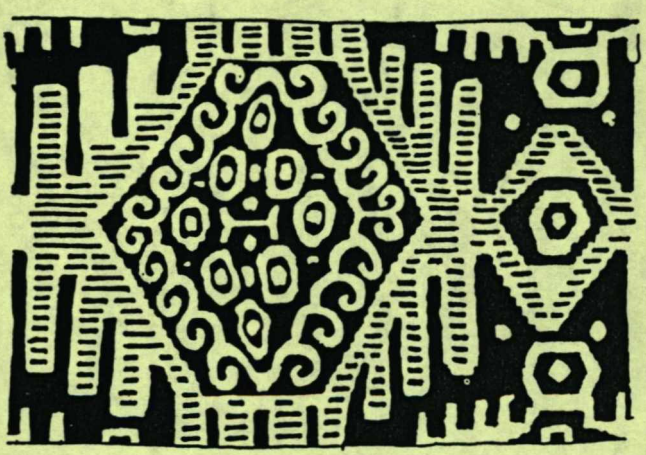
EAST TIMOR

STATEMENT
TO THE UN DECOLONISATION COMMITTEE

NEW YORK, JULY 1992



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The Indonesia Human Rights Campaign

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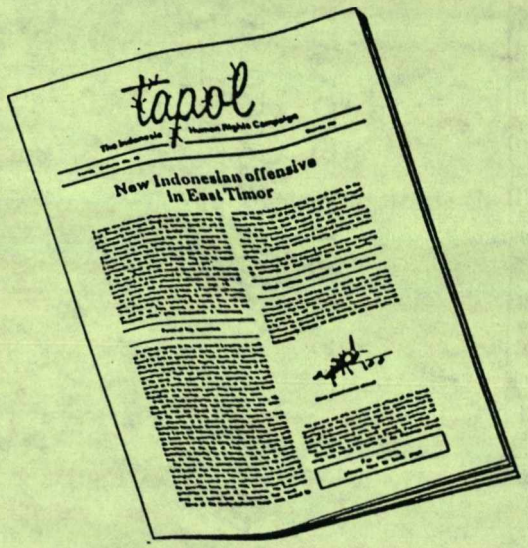

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Statement on East Timor
to the UN Decolonisation Committee
by
TAPOL, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign

Mr. Chairman and honourable members,

On behalf of **TAPOL**, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign, I thank you for the opportunity to petition your Committee about East Timor. Our organisation has followed events in East Timor since the Indonesian invasion of 1975. I would like to make an assessment of recent developments in East Timor, in particular since the Santa Cruz Massacre of 12 November.

The international outcry and its impact on the Jakarta Government

The massacre in Santa Cruz was not an 'incident', as the Indonesian authorities claim, but part of a history of mass killings in East Timor. It was the presence of foreign journalists and a British cameraman when Indonesian soldiers opened fire on a defenceless crowd that made all the difference. The Suharto government, which has one of the worst human rights records, faced an unprecedented wave of protests.

Also unprecedented was President Suharto's decision to set up two commissions: a National Inquiry Commission and a Military Inquiry Commission. The commissions were created for two reasons, to resist strong demands for an independent inquiry by convincing world opinion that the matter was being taken seriously; and to use the tragedy to 'clean out the stable' by adjusting policies, punishing and replacing military personnel, and so on. It is well known that Suharto's policies in East Timor had been encountering opposition at army headquarters for some time. Suharto's efforts at damage limitation resulted in several governments welcoming the measures as "credible", "evenhanded" and "encouraging".

Nothing could be further from the truth. The preliminary report of the National Inquiry Commission (*KPN*) served to deny access to an international inquiry into the killings. Members of the Commission which was led by a retired general hardly spoke with the victims. A deep-rooted fear among the Timorese would have made it impossible even for a genuinely Indonesian commission to get at the truth. The *KPN* ignored graphic evidence in the film, *Cold Blood* and statements by foreign eyewitnesses, Allan Nairn, Amy Goodman, Max Stahl and Russell Anderson.

Jakarta's 'evenhandedness' meant that both peaceful Timorese demonstrators and Indonesian military were tried. Timorese students demonstrating in Jakarta a week after the massacre were sentenced to up to 10 years; Timorese tried in Dili for participating in the 12 November memorial procession got from 6 years to life. In contrast, responsible military commanders were 'punished' by being sent to the US for further studies while low-ranking soldiers who admitted to shooting at the innocent crowd received sentences averaging less than one year.

Mr. Chairman and honourable members,

In this post Cold War period, the role of the UN has been greatly enhanced. We therefore welcomed the initiative of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to send Dr. Amos Wako as his special representative to Indonesia and East Timor in February and to talk to people on the spot. We look forward to publication of Dr Wako's report in the belief that it will contribute to a proper understanding of the real situation in East Timor.
Regarding the Wako visit we must draw your attention to grave restrictions. Although official visits to East Timor are routinely stage-managed, the Wako visit was unique. The newly appointed commander of East Timor, Brig.General Theo Syafei treated the visit as a test case. No effort was spared to control the entire region. Several layers of military patrols were stationed round Dr. Wako's hotel to prevent anyone approaching him. The Jakarta-based Legal Aid Institute (*LBH*) reports:
"... repressive measures were taken. The local apparatus arrested and detained about 120 youngsters who had previously been held in connection with the 12 November 1991 event. The arrested youngsters were 'invited' by their respective village head and the local army NCO to attend compulsory courses. The invitation told them to bring enough clothes for several days. In fact, they were taken to the KODIM (Military Subdistrict Command) and told to sign statements that they would make no attempt to meet Amos Wako. According to a witness who met them, the 120 youngsters were then taken to the barracks of Infantry Battalion 744 in Taibessi, Dili and split into 3 groups of 40. Nobody was allowed to meet them. Then, on 15 February, they were taken for several days to Same sub-district, about 100kms from Dili".[1]

Brig.Gen. Theo Syafei boasts of being a hardliner and blames his predecessor, General Warouw, for being too soft on the Timorese. This same Theo Syafei has warned the Timorese that if a demonstration like the one on 12 November were to happen during his commandership, there would probably be even more casualties.

The other newly installed commander is Major-General Mantiri, responsible for the Nusa Tenggara region which includes East Timor, has also shown the true face of the Indonesian army. In a recent interview he said of the Santa Cruz massacre:

"....We don't regret anything. What happened was quite proper. As military this is so. They were opposing us, demonstrating, even yelling things against the government. To me that is identical with rebellion, so that's why we took firm action" [2]

Last week the Indonesian army revised its casualty figure for the Santa Cruz massacre. The official number of dead is now said to be 19 (the figure first given by General Try Sutrisno but later dismissed as 'too low' by the KPN); 31 of the 115 'missing' persons have now allegedly been found 'alive and well', leaving a total of 66 persons 'unaccounted for'. Who do the Indonesians think they can fool with such concoctions?

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[1] Defence of Fernando de Araujo by Lawyers Team: Luhut Pangaribuan, Amir Syamsudin and Abdul Hakim G. Nusantara read on 11 May in the District Court of Central Jakarta, page 57

[2] **Editor**, 4 July 1992, page 85

Why has the army still failed to produce the name of a single victim? Why have no bereaved families been able to bury their loved ones? And, as if to mock the grieving Timorese, Brig.Gen. Syafei said on 20 July that he hopes all the 66 are dead.

Mr. Chairman,

TAPOL has made statements to this committee on many occasions primarily to inform this august body about the military situation in East Timor. We want to continue this tradition.

Ever since the Indonesian invasion in 1975, East Timor has been run like a military operation. A special military structure was designed with a direct line of command to military headquarters in Jakarta. In June this year, Brig. General Theo Syafei announced that changes would be likely to occur in East Timor in September when combat troops would be withdrawn and the special military structure *Kolakops* would be dissolved. Let us take a closer look at the so-called demilitarisation of East Timor.

Firstly, the withdrawal of combat troops. Anybody familiar with the 16-year history of East Timor's occupation knows that the major, traditional battles between *ABRI* (the Indonesian armed forces) and *Falintil* (the armed wing of the East Timorese resistance) took place from 1975 to 1978. *ABRI*, superior in weaponry and the number of men under arms, gradually took control of large parts of the country. *Falintil* adjusted its strategy and diversified into small guerrilla units, while *ABRI*'s role became increasingly territorial, to control the majority of the population in the cities and resettlement camps. The entire eighties was taken up by a huge territorial effort by the army to pacify the East Timorese. Commander Theo Syafei has said in recent interviews that the main security threat is not the small, roaming guerilla units but the expanding anti-colonial movement among young East Timorese. The withdrawal of combat troops only highlights this strategy but it does not mean that armed resistance has ceased to be a threat. Only this month, Brig. General Syafei admitted that between 7 and 10 clashes occur every month.

The withdrawal of some combat units from East Timor should also be assessed against the background of increased guerrilla activities in Aceh and West Papua, the two other trouble-spots for Jakarta. General Edi Sudradjat, the army chief-of-staff, has warned that insurrections in these three areas are an obstacle to economic development:

"That's why all kinds of separatist movements led by any group of extremists that want to divide the unity of the Indonesian Republic must be wiped out" [3]

In recent months, territorial operations have been reinforced by a huge increase in the number territorial troops in the area. In trouble spots such as the villages around Dili, as many as five platoons have been stationed in each village. As with combat troops, territorial troops from all parts of Indonesia are usually stationed for between 6 months and 2 years.

Should *Falintil* step up guerilla activities, army head-quarters can always dispatch *KOSTRAD* rapid deployment forces which have two combat-ready battalions in Java. The

[3] **UPI report**: Indonesia ties economy to separatists, 10 July 1992

new territorial strategy is explained in a paper, *"Perspectives for territorial operations in the development of human resources in East Timor"* by the *Kolakops* commander, Theo Syafei. Implicitly, the paper admits that they have lost the hearts and minds of the youth and see the short- and medium-term task as being to create a sense of security - in other words, protecting the population from pro-independence elements. Another task is to create cadres, in other words, to make Indonesians out of the East Timorese, and to establish *desa binaan* (guided villages), in other words, villages with a heavy presence of territorial soldiers, controlling and indoctrinating the villagers. General Syafei said that he would take four approaches: persuasive, educational, preventive and repressive:

"To implement persuasive and educational methods, a certain supportive condition is needed to help villagers develop their village wholeheartedly and with full concentration. Therefore, preventive measures will be taken, including setting up security posts, patrols and compulsory nightwatches. These measures are intended not to frighten the population but protect them and allow justice to prevail. These measures will also be taken against foreign visitors who use the hospitality of the East Timorese to spread issues and vilify East Timor [4]

The dissolution of *KOLAKOPS* is a cosmetic measure. Even without a formal structure, East Timor will continue to be a special military project for the army. Strong emphasis on the territorial structure will minimise the use of special command units; in emergencies Brig.General Theo Syafei will be able to rely on special combat units from Java.

Mr. Chairman and honourable members,

Much has changed in the world today, good things as well as bad things. So it is with East Timor. The tragic events in Santa Cruz had a positive result by bringing East Timor onto the international agenda. Far more people realise that a political solution for East Timor is crucial. As East Timorese say, wherever they are - in East Timor, in Indonesia or in exile in Australia and Portugal - peace negotiations are long overdue. It is for the international community, the United Nations, to take the initiative and bring the parties concerned to the negotiating table. The Timorese resistance is prepared to talk with the Indonesians without preconditions, in the international spirit of today, an offer the Indonesians cannot reject. We are convinced that this Committee will take the important step of advising the Secretary General to accelerate this peace process.

Thank you.

Liem Soei Liong, 27 July 1992

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[4] Perspektif Operasi Teritorial dalam pengembangan sumber daya manusia Timor Timur, Makalah PANGKOLAKOPS TIM-TIM dalam seminar IMPETTU se Jabotabek, Dili 21 April 1992, page 19

TAPOL OCCASIONAL REPORTS

No.1 Exchange of messages with Fretilin commander Shanana Gusmao with Lord Avebury, chair Parliamentary Human Rights Group and Carmel Budiardjo, Tapol Organising Secretary.

No.2 Joint Statement by Union of Democratic Timorese and Fretilin, March 1986.

No.3 Reactions from Indonesia to Transmigration Campaign. Indonesian press clippings reacting to the campaign by Survival International and TAPOL.

No.4 Statement on East Timor to the UN Committee of 24, August 1986.

No.5 The 1987 Indonesian Election in East Timor. An analysis written by TAPOL.

No.6 TAPOL Statement on East Timor to the UN Committee of 24, August 1987.

No.7 July 1987 Statement on the Joint Decision of the Chairman of the Supreme Court and Minister of Justice, by IKADIN, the Indonesian Lawyers' Association.

No.8 World Bank maintains support for Transmigration. Survival International and TAPOL write to World Bank, 22 January 1988.

No.9 TAPOL Statement on East Timor to the UN Committee of 24, August 1988.

No.10 Open Letter to the World Bank on the Kedung Ombo Dam.

No.11 TAPOL Statement on East Timor to the UN Decolonisation Committee, August 1989.

No.12 IGGI and Human Rights. Press coverage on IGGI Chairman Pronk visit to Indonesia. INFIGHT notes presented to Minister Pronk.

No.13 TAPOL statement to the UN Decolonisation Committee, August 1990

No.14 UN resolutions on East Timor, 1975-1982

No.15 Tapol Statement to the UN Decolonisation Committee, August 1991

No.16 Freeport and Tribal People

No.17 The killing fields of East Timor

No.18 The Moi people against the loggers

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